Self Report Studies

Advantages

➔ Gives insight into motivations of crime and causes of crime.

Disadvantages

➔ Participants may not tell the truth or be honest
➔ Not representative as only some social groups take the survey.

Victim Survey

Advantages

➔ Provides informations about patterns of victimisation and fear of crime.

Disadvantages

➔ Problems of generalising
➔ Findings may not be accurate or valid - be aware they have been a victim or they may not trust the researcher.
The Chivalry Thesis

- Pollak (1950) put forward the chivalry thesis which argues men are socialised to be protective of women.
- Majority of Police force /Criminal justice system are male, their chivalry means women are less likely to be arrested and are treated more leniently.
- This can lead to underestimation of female crime in official statistics. This allows female criminal activity to go undetected as chivalrous behaviour works as a form of sexism against male offenders.
- The chivalry thesis has been criticized as sociologists argue that women’s crime generally are less serious than men that's why they are punished less.
- Plus women often show remorse which means they are more likely to be treated leniently.

Sex role theory

- Girls are brought up to be passive and conformist so are less likely to commit crime.
- In contrast boys are brought up to be ‘tough’ and ‘manly’. This can make them more aggressive and more likely to commit violent crime.
- Boys and girls are socialized differently, Heidensohn women are socialised into not being criminal as its highly seen as deviant. however men are socialised into seeing criminal activity as acceptable.
Crime and Ethnicity and Social Class

Crime Statistics can be Unreliable

- Police statistics show that ethnic minorities in general and particularly black people are more likely to be stopped, searched and arrested or end up in prison. However these statistics are not actually representative; they have been skewed by other factors such as age and gender.
- But black people are still more likely to be stopped and searched it’s just that their over representation is not quite significant as the statistics suggests.

Sociologists try to Explain the Trends

Bowling and Phillips (2007) - Police racism results in higher suspicion against black people in general. 
- The Macpherson report (1999) concluded that the police are institutionally racist.
- The court system favours white middle class defendants.
- There are few black people in the police or legal system.
Victims, Prevention and Punishment

➔ Young men aged 16 - 24 experience the most violence.
➔ However, more women are afraid of becoming victims of crime.
➔ Women are more likely than men to be victims of domestic violence.
➔ People from ethnic minority groups are twice as likely to be victims of robbery than white people.
➔ Those from high income households are more likely to be victims of credit/debit card fraud.

Victimology Theories explain how people become victims

➔ Christie (1986) - ‘victim’ is a social construct and society see certain people as victims e.g. an old man.

Positivity victimology and Critical victimology = Sociological theories that explain how people become victims of crime

Positivist victimology - interested in how some people are more likely to become victims than others, either because of their actions or characteristics. This approach has been criticized for victim blaming.

Critical victimology - influenced by Marxism/Feminism, groups who are likely to be oppressed (women and working class) are also likely to be victims. (Structural powerless). Critical victimologists such as Tombs and Whyte (2007) argue those in power can fail to label sufferers as victims; they refuse to acknowledge the harm that has been done and sometimes blames the victim.
Surveillance used to detect/prevent crime

★ Physical surveillance such as CCTV cameras are used to detect criminals.
★ Technological surveillance involves screening online communications, collecting personal data and phone calls. Government and police use this information to detect criminal activity.
★ Gives government too much power over individuals; we are living in a 'surveillance society'.

Society tries to Control Crime through formal and informal agents

Formal - The police responsible for enforcing the law, the parliament passes laws to say what behaviour is criminal, the courts which determine punishments.

Informal - Family units, the education system, religion and media.

Criminals are Punished for these reasons

★ Functionalists - If crimes went unpunished society would collapse, public punishment of criminals was good for society as it helps create unity and consensus as people came together to condemn the criminal.
★ Marxists - The police are used to enforce social control in poorer areas whilst rich get away with crime unchallenged.
★ The interventionist camp - Prison seen as deterrent to put people off committing crimes.

Roles of Prisons are Changing

★ Removing criminals from the streets so they can’t commit any more crimes.
★ Prisons are taking on more of a welfare role than they have before.
★ Lead to transcarceration